

different. In *minima* the subcaudal count is appreciably lower and there is no vertebral stripe. The maxillary bones of both species are differently shaped. The only other small Australian Elapine snake which approaches the low combined subcaudal and ventral scale counts of *Melwardia minima* is *Rhynchoelaps bertholdi* (Jan.). However, *M. minima* is an unbanded snake and there are no outer processes on the ectopterygoid which are prominent features in *Rhynchoelaps*.

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A NEW SPECIES OF WEED-FISH OF THE GENUS *PETRAITES* FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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FAMILY CLINIDAE

Petraites equiradiatus sp. nov.

D.iii,xxviii.3; A.ii,20; P.12; V.(i),3; C.11.

Body fairly elongate, the greatest height contained 4.6 times in the standard length (5.4 in the total length including caudal). Snout rounded; head 4.1 times in standard length (4.9 in total length). Minute cycloid scales. Nasal cirrus well developed, multifid with 8 or 9 filaments. Supra-orbital tentacle with a long, tapering outer filament and two short inner ones, all broadly joined at base. First three dorsal spines about equal in length, very slightly longer than those following from which they are separated by a gap approximately equal to third spine when depressed; first spine situated just before vertical from margin of pre-operculum and the third joined by membrane to basal portion of fourth, which is placed over hind border of operculum. Anal fin commences beneath twelfth dorsal spine. First anal spine about two-thirds length of second; rays subequal, the posterior ones, with exception of last, being a fraction longer than the anterior. Last dorsal ray wholly connected to caudal peduncle by membrane; last anal ray only joined basally. Pectoral fin rounded, thick simple rays. Ventral fin with a concealed spine and three similar finger-like rays; the middle ray is only very slightly longer than other two and reaches approximately half-way to vent. Caudal fin truncate. Lateral line distinct anteriorly as a series of closely-set tubed-scales extending over about two-thirds of the pectoral fin, the series then descending to mid-line and continuing to tail, becoming very widely spaced and obscure.

Colour in formalin:—Fairly uniform yellow, except for paler abdomen. Faintest suggestion of about seven darker yellow bands on upper sides.

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1 cm.

N.E.M.

Petraites equiradiatus sp. nov.

Relationships.—The species differs from other members of the genus recorded from Australia in having the three rays of the ventral fin all similar and the supra-orbital tentacle with a long outer filament and two short inner ones, all of which are broadly joined at the base. In the other species, *P. roseus*, *antimeetes*, *heptaeolus* and *nasutus*, the inner ray of the ventral fin is either reduced and slender or totally absent, and the supra-orbital tentacle consists of a short flap, which may be fringed or simple, without an elongate filament.

The species name is derived from the equality of the rays in the ventral fin, which forms a valuable diagnostic character.

The description is based on two specimens collected by Dr A. R. Main during February 1957. They were obtained at night from off the coastal-limestone platform at the western end of Wilson Bay, Rottneest Island. The specimens measured 97 and 83 mm. in total length and were identical in fin-ray counts.

The larger specimen is designated the type of the species and is lodged at the Western Australian Museum, No. P 4472. The smaller specimen is to be donated to the Australian Museum, Sydney.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Pigmy Possums at Bickley.—At my home in Piesse Gully, Bickley, on the afternoon of June 16, 1959, I found a South-western Pigmy Possum (*Cereuertus concinna*) drowned in an open water-tank at the edge of the bush. Remarkably enough after nightfall in the evening my wife found a domestic cat playing with another one of the little animals which it had caught and killed.

These were the first we had ever seen here over many years of residence. Fortunately, we were able to forward the two obtained to the Western Australian Museum, and we are indebted to the Director, Dr. W. D. L. Ride, for the identification.

—W. H. LOARING, Bickley.

Reappearance of Red-winged Wren in Old Haunts.—Towards the end of July 1959 my sister, Mrs. A. H. McWhirter, was astonished to see a male Red-winged Wren (*Malurus elegans*) in the garden of her home at Brookwood, Bickley. Brookwood is situated towards the lower end of one of the tributary streams of Piesse